

CBS Mornings

10/19/26

7:00:24 a.m. [TEASE]

6 seconds

NORAH O'DONNELL: Plus, the move from President Trump to help gain support in the midterms and why it's getting bipartisan backlash.

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7:00:35 a.m. [TEASE]

15 seconds

GAYLE KING: The President makes a final midterm push in some tight races in key states that could give Democrats control of Congress.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Pivotal Midterms]

TONY DOKOUPIL [TO VANCE] [on CBS's *Things That Matter: A Town Hall with Vice President JD Vance*, 10/17/26]: Are you nervous?

VICE PRESIDENT JD VANCE [on CBS's *Things That Matter: A Town Hall with Vice President JD Vance*, 10/17/26]: The nature of these races is that you get out there, you make the best case you can to the American people, and they ultimately get to decide.

(....)

7:08:29 a.m.

2 minutes and 40 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: America Decides; Trump Defends Blocking Sanctions on Russia]

O'DONNELL: Turning to politics, we're two weeks until the midterm elections and President Trump is facing backlash over a move to bring down gas prices. The President signed an order to block new Russia sanctions just before they could take effect, and it comes as he continues his campaign swing to support Republicans in red states. Weijia Jiang is at the White House tracking it. Lots to report about, Weijia, good morning.

WEIJIA JIANG: Norah, good morning to you and good morning to everybody. This unexpected reversal comes less than two weeks after President Trump announced U.S. would purchase diesel from Russia and despite warnings they would help Moscow in the war. It stresses, though, the importance of addressing high energy prices, which is, of course, a defining issue for voters. In an effort to bring down gas prices, President Trump waived sanctions on Russia that were supposed to go into effect Sunday, including on Russian oil. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the move.

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY [on NBC's *Meet the Press*, 10/18/26]: Of course, if these countries will be together, of course — of course, we will not prevail, and we will not be able to stand.

JIANG: Trump said his decision was in the national interest and posted that he does not “want to do anything that will drive, foolishly, Russia away from the bargaining table,” as he tries to end the war with Ukraine. Energy Secretary Chris Wright echoed the explanation.

ENERGY SECRETARY CHRIS WRIGHT [on ABC's *This Week*, 10/18/26]: This is a carrot to try to end a war. It's not an economic lifeline for Russia.

JIANG: Still, the move has received bipartisan backlash.

SENATOR TIM KAINE (D-VA) [on *Fox News Sunday*, 10/19/26]: I think the President's actions are outrageous and they continue a pattern of cozying up to Putin.

JIANG: Michigan's Republican Senate candidate, Mike Rogers, says he supports sanctions against Russia.

FORMER CONGRESSMAN MIKE ROGERS (R-MI) [on CNN's *State of the Union*, 10/18/26]: I'm just a little skeptical this will work in the way the administration wants it to work, and we're paying a heavy price here in Michigan.

JIANG: Rogers accused his opponent — Democratic nominee Abdul el-Sayed — of having ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, which el-Sayed has repeatedly denied, including during this exchange at a town hall gathering on Saturday.

TOWN HALL ATTENDEE “TOMMY” [TO EL-SAYED]: Will you disavow the Muslim Brotherhood?

ABDUL EL-SAYED: Sure, absolutely. I want to — I want to ask — to the question that you're asking, why are you asking the question? [SCREEN WIPE] [APPLAUSE] You assume, Tommy, cause I am Muslim, that somehow I would have some allegiance to something that is not our Constitution. That's your assumption.

JIANG: El-Sayed and Rogers are locked in a tight race that CBS News considers a toss-up. President Trump plans to campaign there in Michigan on Sunday after making stops in Kansas, the Carolinas, and Iowa this week. A busy one, Gayle.

KING: Okay, the countdown is on. Weijia, thank you.